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ABSTRACT

The clean and plentiful waters of the Connetquot basin's ponds, streams and marshlands have nurtured an extraordinarily rich ecosystem which has always been prized by both Native Americans and subsequent immigrants to this country. Since 1973, 3,476 acres have been preserved as Connetquot River State Park. To aid elementary and secondary teachers in utilizing facilities and services of the Park and the Outdoor Learning Laboratory, this guide lists some of the flora and fauna seen in the Park during 1978 (over 170 species of wildflowers, more than 200 species of birds, 24 species of reptiles and 16 species of fish); describes the natural history of the area; provides a travel map and directions for reaching the Park, emergency and staff telephone numbers, and safety instructions; outlines conservation practices and conduct guidelines for teachers, students and parents; and details the teacher participation inservice training requirements and opportunities. (NEC)

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Site Guide

to

Connetquot River State Park

RC 011937

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Outdoor Learning Laboratories

Expanding the Classroom into the Natural World

SITE GUIDE

to Connetquot River State Park

1973 revised 1978

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Outdoor Learning Laboratories

Expanding the Classroom into the Natural World

SCOPE OUTDOOR LEARNING LABORATORIES

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Orin Lehman, Commissioner

Long Island State Parks
and Recreation Commission

Belmont Lake State Park,
Babylon, New York
John G. Sheridan, General Manager

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Superintendent, Mount Sinai

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Jaimie P. Nathanson, Director Outdoor Educational Special Services

Outdoor Learning Laboratories Office in:

Sunken Meadow State Park
P. O. Box 186
Kings Park, NY 11754
269-4343

Nissequogue River State Park
P. O. Box 17
Smithtown, NY 11787
360-3652

Connetquot River State Park

Mr. Gilbert Bergen, Supervisor

ACTIVITIES

By Permit and Reservation

GUIDED NATURE WALK AND INTERPRETIVE TOUR

10:00 A.M. 1:00 P.M. 3:00 P.M.

An approximately two hour, two mile walk featuring the grist mill, the fish hatchery, history and ecology of the Connetquot River State Park.

By Reservation: 581-1005

TROUT FISHING

Fly rod fishing for brook, brown and rainbow trout - 4 hour sessions.
7 - 11 A.M., 12 - 4 P.M., 5 - Darkness

By Reservation: 581-1005

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Seasonal nature study programs.
BOCES - SCOPE Outdoor Learning Laboratory.

BRIDLE PATHS

Annual or daily permits required for horseback riding on designated trails.

By Permit: 581-1005

Upon request, special hours, walks, lectures or activities can be arranged to explore many areas of interest.

By Permit: 581-1005

CONTENTS

Personnel and Telephone Numbers 1

Connetquot River State Park
- Woodland Headwaters 2
- The Flora and Fauna 3
- Background 5
- Road Directions Map to the Park 7
- Directions to the Outdoor Learning Laboratory. . 8
- Map of the Connetquot River State Park 9

Safety, First Aid and Emergencies 11

Guidelines for Teachers, Students and Parents . . . 12

Equipment 14

Conservation Practices 15

Teacher Participation Plan 16
- Day-Use Inservice 18
- Implementation of the Day-Use Program 19
- Residential Inservice and Implementation 21
  - Residential Inservice 21
  - Residential Implementation 23

Inservice Credit for Participating Teacher 24

Teacher Participation in Supplementary Programs
- Saturday Optional Environmental Workshops . . . 25
- Regional and Subregional Environmental Workshops 25

Personnel and Telephone Numbers

1. **Emergency Phone Numbers**

Hospital:	Southside Hospital Montauk Highway Bay Shore, NY Admitting: 859-3035
Police:	Emergency - MO9-2500
Fire:	Dial Operator and ask for the East Islip Fire Department, informing the operator that it is an emergency.

2. **Staff Phone Numbers**

Connetquot River State Park	JU1-1158 JU1-1005
Outdoor Learning Laboratories	
Sunken Meadow State Park	269-4343
Connetquot River State Park	581-6016 589-5700

11

CONNETQUOT RIVER STATE PARK

Woodland Headwaters

In the shade of hardwood forest and pine woods the clear waters of many ponds flow in unpolluted streams to merge into the Connetquot River; the widening Connetquot empties into Great South Bay on Long Island's south shore.

For some ten thousand years since the Wisconsin glaciation, the gentle waterway has drained seaward through and from the Ronkonkoma moraine, its watershed extending from just below Hauppauge and Lake Ronkonkoma to the bay and from Islip on the west to near Patchogue on the east. For several millenia and into the present, this well-watered and well-protected shallow basin has nourished a complex ecosystem comprised of scores of varieties of woodland and fresh water flora and fauna. Moving southward through its basin, the Connetquot stream broadens into a chain of ponds and is fed additional ponds and marshes just above where it is now crossed by Sunrise Highway; in this headwaters area, before the stream widens into a river and an estuary, lies the heartland of the ecosystem. Of this heartland a huge area totaling 3,476 acres has been preserved as Connetquot River State Park.

The Flora and Fauna

(Based on the species list at the Connetquot River State Park by park staff, May 1978)

Trees, Shrubs, and Vines: Wetland areas consist of Swamp Maple - Black Gum associations with many species of shrubs. Upland areas are comprised of Oak - Pine associations with the predomination of Blueberry and Huckleberry understory.

Trees - - species include:

- Red Cedar
- Pitch Pine
- Alder
- Black Cherry
- Black Gum
- Hickory
- Mulberry
- Oak (5 species)
- Sassafras
- Witch Hazel

Shrubs - - species include:

- Swamp Azalea
- Bayberry
- Blueberry (3 species)
- Huckleberry (2 species)
- Swamp Sweetbells
- Sweetfern

Wildflowers - - Over 170 species include:

- Buttercup
- Forget-Me-Nots
- Indian Pipes
- Jack-in-the-Pulpit
- Marsh Marigold
- Ox-eye Daisy
- Purple Vetch
- Smooth Aster
- Trumpet Creeper
- Watercress

Vines - - species include:

- Honeysuckle
- Wisteria

Ferns - - 12 species include:

Bracken Fern
Cinnamon
Sensitive Fern
Hay - scented

Mosses, Fungi and Lichens - - 6 species include:

Sphagnum Moss
Reindeer Lichen

Birds - - over 200 species include:

Cormorant
Heron
Swan
Osprey
Turkey
Owl
Eagle
Hummingbird
Swallow (4 species)
Bluebird
Wood Warbler (24 species)
Mockingbird

Mammals - - 17 species include:

Longtail Weasel
Opossum
Raccoon
Red Fox
White Tail Deer
Southern Flying Squirrel

Reptiles - - 24 species include:

Bullfrog
Fowler's Toad
Box Turtle
Snapping Turtle
Eastern Garter Snake
Northern Black Race

Fish - - 16 species include:

Trout (3 species)
Smallmouth Bass
Stickleback
Pirate Perch

Background

The clean and plentiful waters of the Connetquot basin's ponds, streams and marshlands have nurtured an extraordinarily rich ecosystem which has been prized by man from Indian times to the present. The Secatogue tribe of Algonquins flourished in the area; their culture is now being studied through artifacts unearthed from an archaeological dig in the park. A settler named William Nicoll bought a patent for the land from the Secatogues and founded the town of Islip. The settlers thrived not only through farming the flatlands and harvesting oysters from the Connetquot estuary but also through fishing the upper river and the headwater ponds and streams.

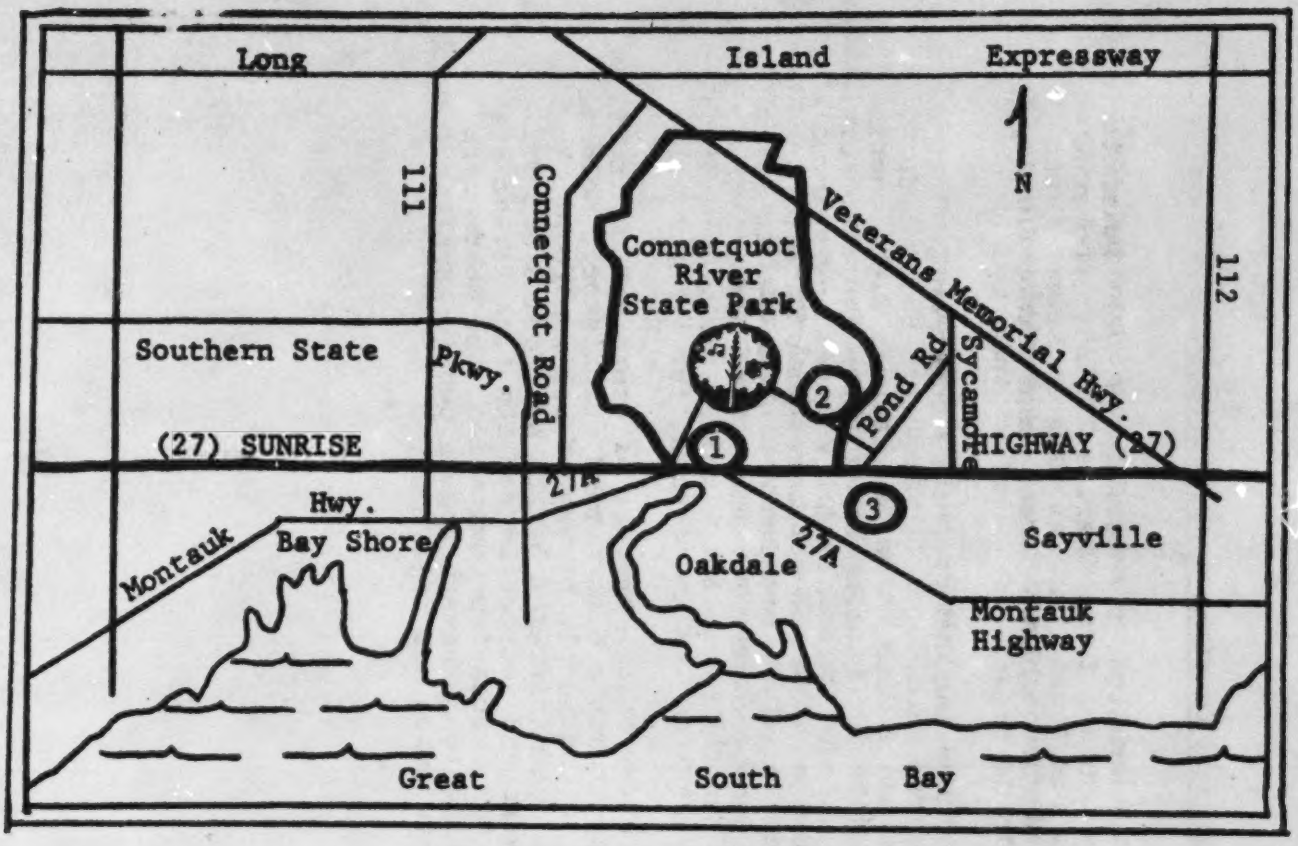
During the eighteenth century the community remained small and impinged gently on the environment. Residents built a saw mill which still stands on the shore of the Connetquot just south of Sunrise Highway; nearby they built St. John's Church, the second oldest church in Suffolk County. Once the peace was disturbed by a charge of witchcraft leveled against one Mary Newton.

The natural richness of the area attracted an innkeeper, Eliphat Snedicor, and in about 1820 he erected an inn which, expanded and renovated, remains incorporated in the present park building. Snedicor's Inn, a gateway to the headwaters' abundance of natural beauty and wildlife, became host to scores of people who enjoyed hunting, fishing, and an unspoiled environment. Among the guests were President Grant, General Sherman, and Daniel Webster. Wealthy guests falling in love with the area bought tracts of land and by gentleman's agreement preserved the better part of their estates in natural condition; among these were

the Vanderbilts, the Lorillards, John Delmonico, of restaurant fame, Charles Tiffany, who made glass for local churches, August Belmont, who raised thoroughbred horses, and Bayard Cutting, who loved trees.

These landowners joined together in 1866 and converted Snedicor's Inn into the South Side Sportsman's Club. The Sportsman's Club functioned as a site for hunting and fishing and also served as a citadel defending the natural environment of its own acreage and the acreages of its members. Members of the Sportsman's Club helped to formulate the concept of the stewardship of property owners--the idea that ownership implies the responsibility of preserving the environment for future generations

After over a century of stewardship, in 1973 the Sportsman's Club turned its historic holdings over to the people by way of selling to New York State. Administered by the New York State Office of Parks and Recreation and the Long Island State Park and Recreation Commission, the headwaters of the Connetquot have become a public parkland for our education and enjoyment.



SCOPE Outdoor Learning Laboratory
in
Connetquot River State Park

DIRECTIONS TO THE OUTDOOR LEARNING LABORATORY

MAP KEY:
1. Park Entrance
2. Pond Road Entrance
3. Suffolk County Water Authority

From Western Suffolk:

Proceed east on Sunrise Highway past the Park entrance on your left. Continue beyond the 27A intersection until you reach the Suffolk County Water Authority Building on your right. Use the turn around and proceed west on Sunrise Highway through the first light then turn right into the Park entrance.

From Eastern Suffolk:

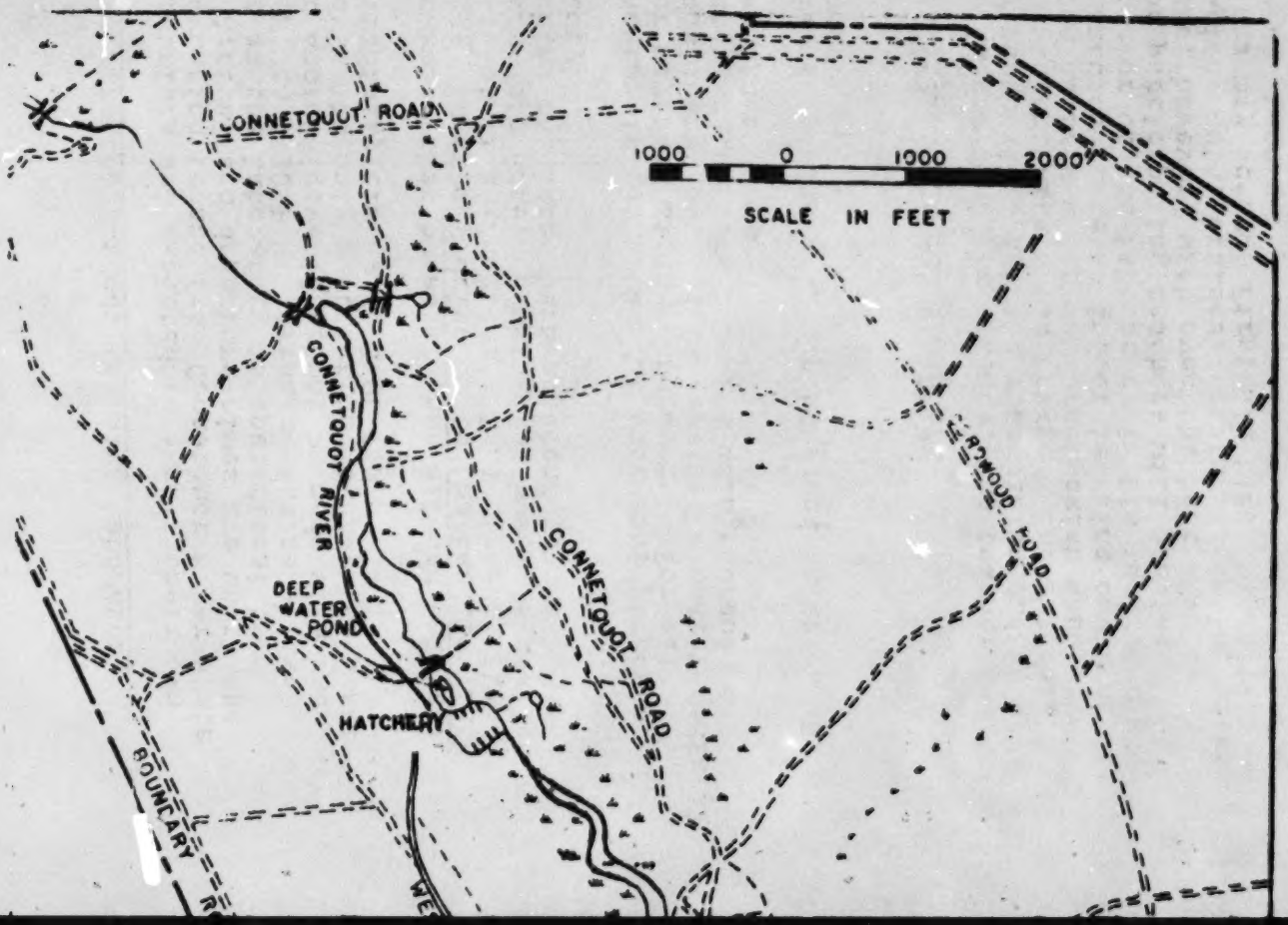
Proceed west along Sunrise Highway past the Suffolk County Water Authority Building on your left. Proceed through the first traffic light where 27A meets Sunrise Highway. Approximately 300 yards ahead turn right into the Park entrance.

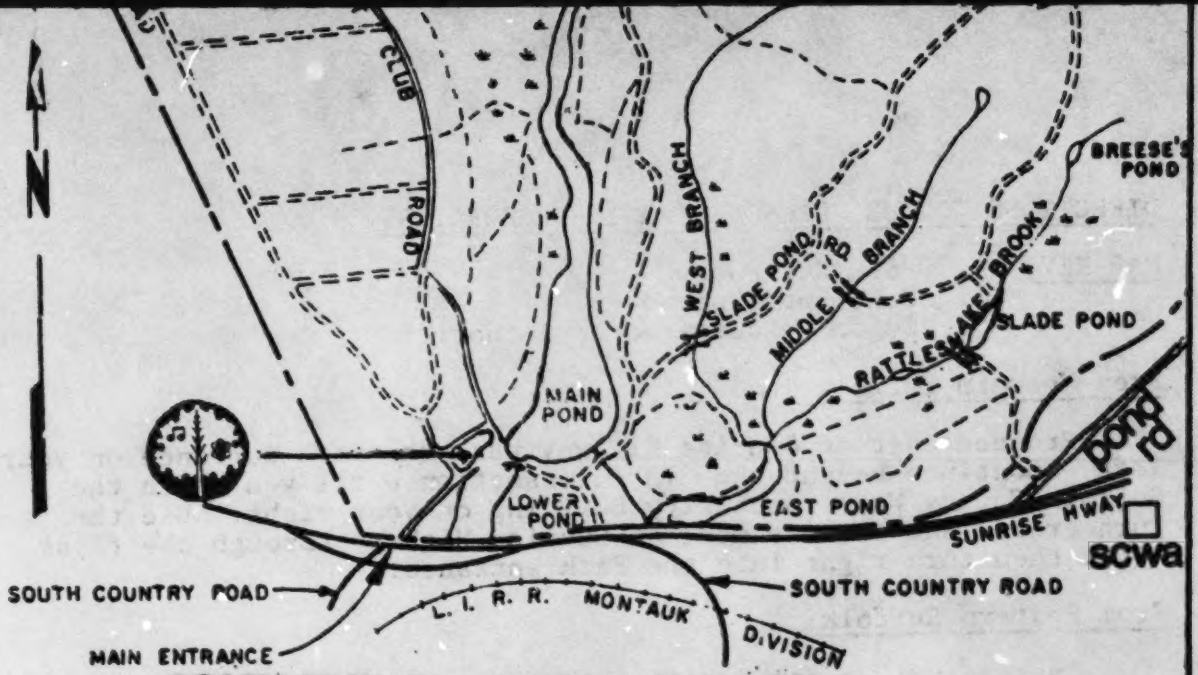
From Northern Suffolk:

Proceed south along Sagtikos Parkway and bear left onto Heckscher Spur. Proceed southeast until the eastern exit for Sunrise Highway (27), then follow directions from Western Suffolk.

PARK ALL AUTOMOBILES IN THE LOWER PARKING LOT BEHIND TOLL BOOTH.

Directions continued on Page)


CONNETQUOT ROAD
1000 0 1000 2000'
SCALE IN FEET
CONNETQUOT RIVER
DEEP WATER POND
HATCHERY
CONNETQUOT ROAD
BOUNDARY



CONNETQUOT RIVER STATE PARK

3476 acres

Directions to the Outdoor Learning Laboratory

Districts are expected to supply their own transportation to and from Connetquot River State Park. Arrival and departure times are up to the teacher as the Laboratory is operational from 8:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. Arrangements to arrive earlier and/or leave later may be made with the Director. The only restriction is that the State Park officially closes at 5:00 P.M.

Remember that buses are not allowed on State Parkways. Buses may drive up to the facility in the mail building (Snedicor's Inn) after checking in at the Main Gate. Parking for buses is available behind the large barn adjacent to the Laboratory.

One car is requested for emergency purposes. This car may park at the Laboratory. For all additional cars, parking is provided almost immediately upon entering the Park from the main entrance off Sunrise Highway.

Please observe a 15 m.p.h. speed limit on all park roads.

Safety, First Aid and Emergencies

As in any field experience, the teacher is legally responsible for the supervision and safety of each student within his charge. The outdoors hold some hazards which we forget exist when we become accustomed to an indoor learning environment. The Director of the Laboratory in his inservice program for participating teachers will provide reminders; however, with even the best advance preparation, cuts, bruises, scratches, insect bites and stings may occur. First aid kits are available in each Laboratory.

Guidelines for Teachers, Students and Parents

Connetquot River State Park

Avoid contact with fishermen and other park visitors - vocal or visual. Students are to work in well supervised groups - large or small.

Smoking by teachers and aids is discouraged because of the "dry" and "composting" environment.

Special attention should be paid to litter, no eating along trails. If a group wishes to eat in a special area, i.e., fish hatchery, English Cove, Slades Pond, the lunches will be packed by the teacher and transported enmasse. All trash is to be carted out.

Pay special attention to the abandonment of equipment - either school or SCOPE. The last person leaving an area should gather all remaining equipment regardless of ownership.

Avoid daffodil plantings and fragile areas.

No random collection of specimens - plant, animal or mineral.

No harassment or disturbance of waterfowl or animals.

Prepare in advance areas of use prior to arrival Avoid fishing docks during fishing season.

Guidelines Continued

Avoid area around mill and mill tail because of obvious safety hazards.

The area around the Annex is a park residence. It is requested to utilize areas other than this.

Avoid any park buildings, fences, vehicles, equipment, boats and storage areas.

The front porch will not be used.

Areas and buildings at the fish hatchery are for structured use (area measurement, population studies, fish hatchery management) and not for random wandering.

Please do not try to feed or disturb horses or riders.

Equipment

Teachers are requested (required) to submit an equipment requisition before each lab usage. This may be done by:

1. Submitting at a planning session.
2. By mail.
3. By telephone.

All quantities dispensed will be indicated by the Director. This does not necessarily coincide with amounts requested, i.e., compass requested - 12; but because one other class will be using compasses also, only 6 will be issued.

At the end of each day of usage, all equipment must be checked in.

On the Director's desk is a steel box containing update equipment inventory at Connetquot. Equipment is stored in the closets in the lab room.

The projector, microprojector and microscopes are stored and available from the Laboratory.

Equipment should be placed on tables or counters prior to class arrival and clearly marked for each class.

First aid kits should be given to each class.

The use of the SCOPEmobile may be required and will be available upon request to the site Director during scheduled planning sessions.

CONSERVATION PRACTICES

Although a good portion of the State Park is available to aid the teacher in his instructional program, it must be remembered that continued use of any area by a group can result in exploitation and damage to the area. This damage could be to plant and animal life or to physical features of the park. The removal of ground cover, the compaction of soil, the erosion of areas due to heavy foot traffic, the continual snapping off of twig and bush specimens and over collecting of any specific plant or animal species, are just some examples of damage to the park setting that is difficult, if not impossible to repair. In order for the park to remain as an almost perfect instructional setting, teachers can assist by making their students more aware of the proper treatment of the park setting. The following suggestions may be of some help.

1. Acquaint your students with the State Park setting problems that could be posed and discuss with them ways to avoid abuses of the environment.

2. Encourage students to "stick to paths" and established walkways of the park.

3. Help establish a tradition where by each class does at least one thing which contributes to the betterment of the environment during their time at the lab.

4. Prevent chipping, cutting, and mutilation of trees and shrubs and avoid collecting or exploitation of animal species.

THE TEACHER PARTICIPATION PLAN

It is only through the teacher participation plan that Suffolk County school districts place students in the Outdoor Learning Laboratories program during the school year.

In the spring prior to the school year concerned the district makes reservations with BOCES for use of a specific site by a "learning unit" -- a learning unit consisting of a teacher, his or her class, and time block or time blocks totaling five school days in the day-use program or five school days and four nights in the residential program.

When reservations are firm, the district asks for individual teachers to take over the reservations for sites and time blocks.

The teachers who accept are invited to the Outdoor Learning Laboratories during the summer prior to the school year for inservice preparation in outdoor education.

Because no students can participate in the program unless accompanied by a teacher who has successfully completed inservice, the teacher can appreciate the fact that his/her role in the program is central.

The teacher begins by participating in the day-use inservice program and then continues into the day-use implementation program on site. Later, he/she may participate in the residential inservice program at an overnight site. The teacher may also wish to participate in supplementary SCOPE inservice programs.

Day-Use Inservice

Inservice training for day-use of sites gives the teacher the following opportunities:

1. to gain an understanding of the principles of outdoor education.
2. to learn the site where they will be teaching.
3. to learn to develop effective curricula and teaching strategies for children.
4. to familiarize themselves with resources, equipment, and materials available from the Outdoor Learning Laboratory.
5. to learn the procedures by which the program operates.
6. to learn to utilize the school site as a resource for supplementary outdoor education activities in order to maximize the time spent at the Outdoor Learning Laboratory.

A minimum of 30 hours of inservice instruction is required of all participants. Day-use sessions are usually scheduled as follows: Five days during the summer prior to the school year at the Outdoor Learning Laboratory site at which the teacher will implement the program.

Inservice continues with individual or small group planning sessions held between the teacher(s) and the site Director. It is the responsibility of the teacher to call the Director to schedule a planning session one to two weeks prior to each of the five class trips. Planning sessions are generally conducted after school at the Laboratory site. In these afternoon sessions, the Director assists the teacher to determine objectives, organize plans, specify activities and list necessary equipment.

In cases where inclement weather is predicted, alternate rainy-day activities are planned. When the final plan is complete, the teacher is ready for site utilization.

Implementation of the Day-Use Program

The five days of class visitation to the Outdoor Learning Laboratory are usually distributed throughout the school year as follows: two days in fall, one day in winter, one day in spring, one day in early summer. This plan enables the students to compare and contrast seasonal changes within the Parks. It is, however, the individual teacher's perrogative to divide the trips to meet the needs of his/her class. (i.e. various medical problems may make it necessary to schedule only warm weather trips, or back to back days may be helpful to reinforce concepts, etc.)

Implementing the Outdoor Learning Laboratory experience first requires making appropriate arrangements and following established procedures.

It is the responsibility of the teacher:

1. to make transportation accommodations and confirm them on the day prior to the Outdoor Learning Laboratory experience.

2. to provide the Outdoor Learning Laboratory with needed information such as student profile sheets and enrollment data.

3. to check all Laboratory equipment upon arrival and departure.

4. to make sure that students wear appropriate clothing.

5. to make sure that each student brings a lunch with his or her name clearly marked on the front. If a teacher wishes to provide a beverage for the class (i.e. hot chocolate, ice tea, etc.) it is his/her responsibility to bring mixes and cups and arrange for the Laboratory to have hot water available.

6. to clarify plans in classroom prior to site arrival (i.e. delegating responsibilities, assigning groups, etc.)

Upon arrival at the Outdoor Learning Laboratory site, the teacher informs the Director of actual student attendance, checks the equipment requested and asks students to pick up the equipment. Following plans clarified in the classroom ahead of time, the teacher expeditiously moves the students into the first stage of their outdoor experience.

In case of inclement weather, lesson plans are shifted to the indoor activities planned ahead of time. At the end of the day, the teacher checks in and accounts for equipment and materials used.

At all times, the teacher can rely on the support of staff personnel for aid in emergencies, for clarifying unforeseeable contingencies, and for providing materials and equipment. The teacher, however, is expected to be self-sufficient enough to avoid last-minute requests for ideas or materials.

A teacher's second or further year of day implementation should be prepared for by continued inservice, although an experienced teacher may be excused by staff from attendance at certain inservice sessions. However, if a teacher plans to utilize a different site, he or she must attend at least the site specific workshops conducted during inservice prior to the school year.

Residential Inservice and Implementation

Successful completion of inservice training and implementation of a day-use program qualifies a teacher for residential participation.

Residential Inservice

Although teacher preparation for managing overnight learning experiences for students is the same in principle as that for day experiences, the overnight situation offers additional opportunities and carries additional responsibilities; participation in a second type of inservice preparation is therefore required.

If the basic principles of teaching in the out-of-doors are understood, overnight inservice concentrates on use of the resources of the site, special equipment such as that which might be used in astronomy, night-time activities, and procedures relative to providing meals and housing.

Overnight inservice is scheduled as an early fall or early spring day(s) to be spent at the site chosen. As with day inservice, planning sessions precede overnight implementation. These are scheduled as group planning sessions usually conducted late afternoon or early evening at one or more of the day-use sites.

The goals and objectives of the residential program are:

1. to develop a greater awareness, understanding, and respect for the natural environment through an interdisciplinary approach to environmental studies.

2. to integrate environmental concepts into the instruction of English, math, social studies, science and the arts.

3. to utilize the land and water resources of other-than-school agencies for the instruction of students and the training of teachers.

4. to combine resources and coordinate programs of schools and other governmental agencies for the establishment of outdoor/environmental programs.

5. to provide an opportunity for students to study the impact of past events in the history of Long Island on the present.

6. to provide an opportunity for students to identify various specific characteristics and functions of organisms and associate the role of each within the ecosystem.

7. to provide an opportunity for students to compare and contrast natural and pristine environments with those modified by man.

The overall goal of the program is to provide natural settings, materials and teacher inservice education for the purpose of infusing environmental studies into the classroom and school.

Residential Implementation

Overnights will be calendared as five days and four nights running.

Overnight implementation requires making arrangements and following procedures parallel to but somewhat more complicated than those used in day implementation. Meals and meal preparation, provisions for bedding and adequate clothing are an added teacher responsibility. The teacher supplements learning experiences with social and recreational experiences.

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As with day implementation, a teacher's second or further year of overnight implementation should be accompanied by overnight inservice, with the possibility of being excused from certain inservice sessions.

INSERVICE CREDIT FOR PARTICIPATING TEACHER

The teacher who successfully completes an inservice and implementation program, either day or overnight, is awarded a SCOPE certificate of completion of two equivalent academic hours. In two different years, a teacher may qualify for both certificates for a total of four credits. Criteria determining qualification for these certificates are the same as those determining qualification for any other inservice credits as spelled out in the general catalog of regional inservice workshops; these criteria include attendance requirements and performance levels judged satisfactory by the Outdoor Learning Laboratories staff.

A second or further year of day participation, or of overnight participation, does not entitle a teacher to additional credits. Additional credits may, of course, be obtained through completion of regional or subregional workshops.

TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN SUPPLEMENTARY PROGRAMS

Saturday Optional Environmental Workshops

All teachers from SCOPE participating districts, whether or not currently participating in the Outdoor Learning Laboratories Program, are welcome to attend environmental tours, canoe trips, demonstrations, and other types of programs on Saturdays during the school year.

Regional and Subregional Environmental Workshops

All teachers affiliated with school districts participating in the SCOPE basic program are welcome to enroll in any of the numerous specialized environmental or other workshops offered through the SCOPE regular and spring supplement catalogs of regional inservice workshops.

School districts participating in the SCOPE basic program are welcome to request environmental or outdoor education workshops designed to meet local needs.